

5-29-2018

# Family Conference Report with Map

San Dewayne Francisco

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As part of the 1995 comprehensive review of each case of an unaccounted for American in Southeast Asia, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's analysts created an electronic database of relevant facts. This ever-changing working tool reflects a snapshot in time summarizing data collected to date, as well as analytical opinions and recommendations. It permits analysts to review pertinent case information quickly, update each record as new information is collected, and develop investigative leads. Following is a narrative of the information contained in the electronic database on this loss.

## Family Conference Report

Prepared On: 5/29/2018

Releasable?

REDACT

### Case Information:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>FRANCISCO, SAN DEWAYNE</b>	<b>Lat:</b>	172059N	<b>Unit:</b>	555 TFS 432 TRW
<b>Refno:</b>	1329	<b>BIO:</b>	01	<b>Long:</b>	1061150E
<b>Service:</b>	USAF	<b>Rank:</b>	O2	<b>MGRS:</b>	48QXE2720018500
<b>Status:</b>	XX	<b>OffscopeCase:</b>	N	<b>Province:</b>	QUANG BINH
<b>Incident Date:</b>	1968/11/25	<b>PriorityCase:</b>	Y	<b>District:</b>	BO TRACH
<b>Vehicle Type:</b>	F4D	<b>Fate Determined:</b>	Y	<b>Township:</b>	THUONG TRACH

### Case Summary

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

On 25 November 1968, [REDACTED] aircraft commander, and First Lieutenant (1stLt) San Francisco, pilot/navigator, of 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, were the crew of an F-4D Phantom (serial # 66-7523; call sign Grommet 02) escorting an RF-4C (call sign Grommet 01) on a photo reconnaissance mission, when downed in a heavily fortified area of the Ban Karai Pass, near the Lao border. At approximately 1245 hours, as Grommet 01 started its mission in the target area, it heard Grommet 02 report that "we've taken a hit." Grommet 01 immediately aborted its mission, but did not see Grommet 02 crash. A steady beeper was heard, whereupon search and rescue forces (SAR) were scrambled, and wreckage was located on the side of a hill at grid coordinates 48Q XE 270 185. When the SAR forces arrived, voice contact was established with both crewmen and a pick-up was attempted at 48Q XE 272 186, but the rescue choppers were driven off by small arms fire. Due to adverse weather conditions, the SAR effort was suspended for the first day. The next morning, a forward air controller (FAC) was on station, but fog in the area hindered its search efforts. As the fog dissipated, [REDACTED] location was confirmed again, however, continuing adverse weather had precluded SAR forces from staging nearby, delaying their response time. When the SAR forces did arrive, radio contact was lost and could not be re-established. The parachute that had been visible the day before had disappeared. All efforts to re-establish contact with the crew failed. SAR forces believed 1stLt Francisco landed very close to enemy personnel and was detained shortly after the initial and inconclusive attempt to contact him. On 26 November, Radio Hanoi and the Nhan Dan newspaper both announced the shoot down and said the two pilots had been captured alive.

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note  
Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

Subsequent to the incident, and while carried in the status of missing-in-action, the U.S. Air Force promoted [REDACTED] to the rank of Colonel and San Francisco to the rank of Major.

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec  
1082 P.L. 102-190

### US Government Information

**SPECIAL REPORTING:** Reported that one pilot had been "picked up in Quang Binh this date." Discussed whether to transport him and another pilot captured the same day to Hanoi, raising the possibility of using an aircraft to move the pilot. ((Note: the reference to the Quang Binh pilot relates to Case 1327 (Ruhling), who was transported by air.))

Refno # 1329

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Reviewed by DPAA IAW 50 USC  
435 Note and DODM 5400.07  
Date: 30 MAY 2018  
Initials: RW

QC'd by DPAA  
Date: 1 JUN 2018  
Initials: LMR



**WARTIME MEDIA:** On 26 November 1968, the People's Army Newspaper (Nhan Dan) carried an article congratulating the people of Quang Binh for shooting down an F-4 on 25 November 1968. The article said the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. Hanoi broadcast also noted the downing, stating the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. [Analyst note: the article addressed the shoot-down of the case 1328 aircraft as well, and the "capture of both crews", hence, the total number of captured crewmen is unclear]

**APRIL 2005, NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (NGA) RESEARCH:** No usable pre-incident imagery was discovered. Post-incident aircraft imagery from 18 December 1968 proved best for analysis. The imagery revealed the possible crash site for Case 1329 in the vicinity of XE 2705 1842. The primary impact site and probable debris field appeared cone or triangular-shaped. The debris field fanned-out from the likely impact site in a west-southwesterly direction, suggesting this was the direction the plane was flying when impact occurred. There were no indications of aircraft wreckage or debris. A possible extension of the debris field, or possibly a second impact site, is located approximately 140 meters further west-southwest.

The area (XE 27873 15511) near Kilometer Marker 51 (52) on Route 20 (wartime Route 137) was analyzed for signs of a burial site. Full analysis was inhibited by the lack of pre-incident imagery. Imagery revealed numerous craters in the area; joint teams discovered two large craters believed to have been caused by rocket strikes from SAR forces.

(b)(3):10 USC § 424 A hand-drawn map depicting the burial location of two American aviators (first turned over to U.S. officials in 1995) resurfaced in a letter sent to the U.S. Embassy, Hanoi on 2 August 2010. (b)(6) personally drew two diagrams related to two U.S. pilots as he photographed the 3,000th aircraft shot down and its pilots. Photographs of 30 American pilots were turned over to the Vietnam News Agency. The diagram of the graves of two American soldiers who flew an RF-4C (sic) shot down on 25 November 1968 at KM 54 along Route 20 in Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province were described. Lieutenant's grave is about 15 to 20 meters off the right hand side of Route 20 at kilometer marker 54. grave is about 20 to 25 meters from the crash site. Area still has a lot of unexploded cluster bombs. It is in the jungle and uninhabited. (REF: MSG DTG 101727Z AUG 10) (b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**20 January 2014 - E-mail Contact:** The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) detachment in Hanoi was contacted by a U.S. citizen who was contacted by a Vietnamese national and forwarded a recounting of the wartime burial of a U.S. aviator. The reported first-hand witness detailed his account in an email forwarded to the detachment. The content of the email was as follows: "The incident occurred in August 1968, during the Vietnam War, in the crucial area of the Ca Rong ford [Ngam Ca Rong, vicinity 48Q XE 27123 17132 (WGS-84 datum)] on "resolved to Win" Route 20, Quang Binh Province, Vietnam. U.S. planes were bombing this area when one of them was shot down. A U.S. pilot parachuted and was captured by Vietnam's armed forces (combat engineers and ground troops). (b)(6) removed some communications equipment from the pilot. Later, many U.S. aircraft attempted to rescue the pilot, but because they could not contact him, they returned and resumed bombing, intensely damaging this area and killing many people, including the U.S. pilot. When all the U.S. aircraft had gone, the Vietnamese forces began evacuating the wounded and burying the dead. The U.S. pilot was buried directly by (b)(6) on a mountain 45 kilometers west of Phong Nha [vicinity 48Q XE 37534 46066 (WGS-84 datum)], in Quang Binh Province. (Ref: Additional Information Report from JPAC, 220648Z Jan 14; Det-2 Info Email, 14 Feb 2014) [Analyst note: see follow-up with (b)(6) under JFAs 14-2VM & 14-4VM below]

**August 2017,** (b)(3):10 USC § 424 The 103rd Company of Vietnam's 280th AAA Regiment shoots down at least eight U.S. aircraft along the Ho Chi Minh Trail around late 1968. Units



and the 103rd Company commander are identified. Information may possibly be associated with four unresolved cases.

Attached article provides limited information on aircraft shoot-downs along the 1968-1969 Ho Chi Minh Trail in Vietnam and Laos, credited to Vietnam's 280th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Regiment. Units and the 103rd Company commander are identified.

Field Comments: Translated information may possibly be associated with REFNOs 1329, 1347, 1388, and/or 1465. A future debrief of personnel named in this report may have to be coordinated with and attended by members of the Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP). Potential sources' availability for debrief is unknown.

[MSG DTG: 061056Z OCT 17, SUB: (b)(3):10 USC § 424 /Element of Vietnam's 280th Air Defense Regiment Shoots Down U.S. Aircraft along the Wartime Ho Chi Minh Trail]

### Joint Investigations

**SUMMARY:** This case has been jointly investigated eighteen times. The crash site has been positively identified. Photos have been identified of the wreckage, one of the crewmen, and related ID media for the other crewman. Multiple eyewitnesses and informants have reported on locations of burial sites for both crewmen, and they were approved for excavation in September 2015. One site has been completed, with no evidence discovered, and the other site is still being worked.

**August 1989, 7th Joint Field Activity (JFA):** Team found the crash site at XE 272185, just 200 meters west [analyst note: should read "east" vice "west"] of the coordinates listed in U.S. records. ID numbers on wreckage allowed team to confirm the crash site. There were no witnesses because local people had been evacuated during the war, and only North Vietnamese Army (PAVN) troops, long since gone, were present. Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) member (b)(6) said someone in Bo Trach had told him in 1988 that remains for one or two Americans were buried vicinity KM 55 marker, Route 20 (war-time Route 137), but team could not confirm this. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329; 230946Z Aug 89)

**January 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity:** Team was told VNOSMP had found information on this case indicating that an F-4C was shot down by unit stationed near "Cau Lang". The crew was a Major and a First Lieutenant with no information on the fate of either crew member. "Cau Lang" could be a Vietnamization of Ko Roong, which is a ford at the 52 KM marker and describes the general area. Investigated KM 54 marker (XE 279 156) of Route 20, looking for alleged burial site; found nothing. (Ref: AIR of Case 1329, 270354Z Feb 91)

**February 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity:** The Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) liaison office in Bangkok provided further observations on case 1329 and the source of information in the previous January 1991 investigation. There was conflicting reporting on whether the suspect burial was at KM 54 or KM 55 markers. (b)(6) from the VNOSMP team provided hearsay that the location was most likely the KM 54 marker. (Ref: 260729Z Feb 91)

**April-May 1992, 17th Joint Field Activity:** Visited Thuong Trach Village; no witnesses, no information. (Ref: None)

**January 1994, Priority Case Investigation Team (PCIT) investigation:** Vietnamese said no more



documentation was available. Said no individuals present at downing were in the province or available for interview. Interviews of authors of books about actions in this general area produced no information on this case. (Ref: PCIT Report Case 1329, 081802Z Apr 94)

**May 1995, Oral History Interview:** Former Vietnam News Agency (VNA) combat photographer (b)(6)

(b)(6) said he photographed the bodies of two American pilots whose aircraft had been downed by a unit of the 280th AAA Regiment. (b)(6) said he learned right away when the 280th had downed an aircraft in the area of Kilometer 54, Route 20. He reached the incident site the next morning which was 20 kilometers from the unit headquarters (14th Battalion?). At the scene, troops and members of an assault youth group told him about the incident. Two pilots had ejected and landed two kilometers apart.

The first pilot, a First Lieutenant, was captured almost immediately and had been wounded in the leg. He was being treated for his injury when a rocket from one of the SAR aircraft hit and killed him and a number of others. The pilot was buried about 15 meters to west of Route 20. (b)(6) asked the soldiers to exhume the body so he could photograph it; only the face uncovered, and he took a picture. The body was no longer intact.

The second pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). The body was approximately two kilometers northwest of the first body, in jungle so thick that it had to be cut away to provide enough light for photography. Troops had found and surrounded him, but he had shot at them, and they had returned fire, killing him. (b)(6) saw the body lying on its back and took a couple of photographs. He did not observe the burial but assumed that one took place. (b)(6) speculated burial would have been on the spot, since it would have been very difficult to move the body, given the difficult terrain.

He next went to the aircraft crash site where he took photos of wreckage. The crash site was 2-3 kilometers southeast of the second body (Lieutenant Colonel). He returned to unit headquarters and took photos of identification media that soldiers had taken from the two bodies. He also took pictures of a large roll of film. He never saw the finished photos after turning them in and never returned to the Route 20 area. Nonetheless, (b)(6) believed he could point out the burial site and offered to help the team find graves. He also identified the photos of the wreckage and remains as photos that he had taken.

(b)(6) identified additional possible witnesses: (b)(6)

(b)(6) in Military Region 4; (b)(6) Group 559 and vanguard cells of Military Region 4; (b)(6) member of Group 559 and vanguard cells (b)(6) former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell (interviewed 8 APR 95); (b)(6) former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell. (Ref: OHP Report, 270922Z Jun 95)

**October-November 1995, Letters from photographer** (b)(6) in two letters (b)(6) provided details of the burial locations. He explained that his medical problems prevented him from accompanying the team to the site at present. He repeated that the lieutenant was buried 15-20 meters west of Kilometer Marker 54. He said the lieutenant colonel (sic) died and was buried 20-25 meters from the aircraft on the left hand side; the crash was two kilometers from the Route 20 Kilometer 54 marker to the right from Xuan Son. He provided a sketch of the graves. His second letter placed (b)(6) grave on right side of the aircraft. (Analyst note: these letters conflict with his original oral history report) (Ref: JTF-FA Report VN95-043 (Letter): (b)(6) 110922Z Jan 96; 170902Z Oct 96; (b)(3):10 USC § 424 (b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190)

**January 1996, Letter from** (b)(6) said he was gradually recovering and asked for a status update of this investigation. He said he would still like to help. He also said there was a marker stone at the crash site and with patience, it could be found. Finally, he said that members of the 7th Youth Assault Group were the ones who buried the crew members in this incident. (Ref: 110922Z Jan 96)

**January 1997, Oral History Interview:** (b)(6) said (b)(6) might have information on wartime volunteer



youth members who knew of U.S. burial sites. (Ref: None)

**May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity:** Thanh Hoa Province (b)(6) reported that (b)(6) health was very poor, and he could not accompany the team to Quang Binh. If he recovered, the U.S. would be notified. The VNSOMP provided a written report to this effect. (Ref: DRI on SRT Case 1329, 280732Z Jul 97)

**May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity Research and Investigations Team (RIT):** The VNOSMP reported that the Vietnamese had interviewed (b)(6) but he had indicated he did not directly observe any crash sites. (REF: MSG DRI of SRT 1329 280732 JUL 97)

**May 1997, Oral History Interview:** (b)(6) current (b)(6) of the Quang Binh Province youth association. (b)(6) was too young to be a wartime participant in the volunteer youth. He said they did not keep regular records since they were not a regular unit. (b)(6) suggested the following witnesses:

(b)(6) Xuan Thuy Village, Le Thuy District;  
 (b)(6), Van Hoa Village, Tuyen Quang District;  
 (b)(6), Quang Trach Village, Bo Trach District;  
 (b)(6) Bac Ly Ward, Dong Hoi Town;  
 (b)(6) Quang Long Village, Quang Trach District;  
 (b)(6), Minh Hoa Village, Minh Hoa District;  
 (b)(6), Nghia Ninh Village, Dong Hoi Town.

(Ref: None)

**May 1997, Oral History Interview:** (b)(6) was a former (b)(6) of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company. He described the organization of the volunteer youth and said that 19 companies comprised the Route 20 "construction site." Before November 1965, what became Route 20 was called the Route 16 site, encompassing Kim Thuy, Ngan Thuy, and Phu Thuy villages. [Analyst note: wartime topographical maps identified this road at Route 137, which became Route 912 upon crossing into Laos]. In November 1965, he and the 7th Company began work on the Route 20 site and stayed there until July 1967. They worked between Km 17 and 54. The area was virtually unpopulated due to its remoteness and U.S. bombing. He described three downings during his tenure, two of which preceded the Case 1329 incident and one that occurred in 1972.

He named the following individuals as possible witnesses: (b)(6) who served as the (b)(6) of the Quang Binh Youth Association during July 1967 to September 1972; and (b)(6) who assumed (b)(6) of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company after (b)(6) left and is a current resident of Dong My Ward, Dong Hoi Town; and (b)(6) former (b)(6) of the 4th Quang Binh 12.7mm AAA company. (Ref: 190912Z Dec 97)

**December 1997, 48th Joint Field Activity:** Team interviewed four witnesses who had no information on this case.

(b)(6) at KM 54) knew about five crash sites, but he witnessed only one incident, a 1972 crash at Kilometer 16. Later he visited crash sites at Km 43 (b)(6) Km 46 (1 died; 1 ejected, Case ?); a reconnaissance prop plane near Km 52 (no information on fate of crewmen, Case ?); and one jet crash at Km 61 (Heard one Lieutenant Colonel ejected and forces searched for him, but (b)(6) did not know what happened to him, Case 1698?).

(b)(6) (12.7mm (b)(6) 7th Youth) knew of three incidents: 1) A fighter aircraft was shot down in March 1966 near Km 14 marker, 2) Late afternoon in late 1968, shot an aircraft that he heard crashed near Km 68 in Laos, 3) At about 1700 hours on an unspecified day in 1966, a 37mm



AAA gun from Binh Tram 14 (BT14) shot down what (b)(6) thought was an A1 (propeller) aircraft. It crashed in a mountainous jungle area near the Ca Roong Stream and Km 54. (b)(6) had no information on the fate of any of the crews.

(b)(6) (7th Youth (b)(6)) stated that at approximately 1100-1200 hours, in October-November 1968, his unit shot down an F-105 near Km 54. Also, during the dry season of 1969 [which standardly runs from November to April], an unknown unit shot down an A-6 flying low, and it crashed near Km 68, on the border, in the general area of Nui Dai Ngang. Lots of SAR activity ensued, and he assumed the pilot was rescued.

(b)(6) (12.7mm (b)(6)) described the capture of one American in 1966 (Case 0240). He described five incidents that probably involved rescued aviators and one downing of a C-130 (Case 1807). (Ref: DRI Special Remains Case 1329, 060712Z Jan 98)

**May 1998, 50th Joint Field Activity:** While investigating another case (1816), team interviewed three former members of the volunteer youth:

(b)(6) served in the Route 12/15 area, not Route 20, with Team 732, (a.k.a. C2, D73).

(b)(6) also served in the Route 12/15 area, as (b)(6) of Team 75. He asserted that

(b)(6) had served with Team 73 and only worked a short stretch of road, and would not know anything about U.S. losses.

(b)(6) operated on Route 12A up until February 1967, at which time he moved to Ba Trai area, south of Gianh Ferry. From 1968-72, he served in Quang Tri. (Ref: DRI of Case 1816, 240702Z Jun 98)

**September 2000, 62nd Joint Field Activity:** Joint team returned to survey the crash site and search for the two graves. A Vietnamese team first swept the site with metal detectors and marked possible unexploded ordnance. (b)(6) previously interviewed in August 1989, said he observed a burning aircraft crash into the hills near where he was stationed. He did not visit the site until about one month later, and he had been there numerous times since. He never saw any remains.

The team searched the surface of the crash site area, finding small pieces of unidentifiable wreckage. The area of old Route 20, which was used during wartime, was also searched. Local Vietnamese officials pointed out where they believed Kilometer Marker 54 had been located; it was now Kilometer Marker 51. Team found no signs of a burial, but did locate two large craters (vicinity of XE 2780 1555). The team thought these might have been the rocket strikes that reportedly killed one crewman. No signs of a burial site could be found nearby. The team recommended searching again, spending one whole day near the road and a second near the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 262016Z Oct 00)

**January 2002, 68th Joint Field Activity:** VNOSMP reported that (b)(6) was in extremely poor health and would be unable to attend an interview or lead a team to the burial site. Team could not fly to the site itself due to inclement weather. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 200812Z Feb 02)

**May 2003, 73rd Joint Field Activity:** (b)(6) again reported information on this case and how he came to photograph the two aviators. He could not recall the names of the guides that took him to the areas where he took the photos. One pilot was buried in proximity of the crash site in the direction of Route 20 (NFI). (b)(6) guided the team to the alleged burial site of a First Lieutenant using terrain association, but he was only able to identify a general area. (b)(6) could only walk with great difficulty, had to be carried most of the time, and required frequent breaks.

The joint team thoroughly searched the area he pointed out, paying special attention to craters. A local official said that several recently dug holes in the area were made by a man who was killed by unexploded ordnance. The area searched included the area around the Kilometer 54 marker, which was at



XE 27873 15511. The VNOSMP reported that there were no persons living in the area at the time. Team surveyed the crash site at XE 27364 18189 (XE 27850 17550 on the map), finding a piece of unexploded ordnance, and also searched several craters along the road. The team assessed there was a high probability of more unexploded ordnance in the area. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 020902Z Jun 03)

**October 2005, 83rd Joint Field Activity:** While investigating another case, the Research and Investigation Team (RIT) obtained additional information that may correlate to Case 0761 (resolved), Case 1105 (unresolved), or Case 1329 (unresolved). (b)(6) with Volunteer Youth Team 25 from July 1965 to early 1970, provided secondhand information on the crash of a U.S. aircraft. While on duty in the headquarters of Volunteer Youth Team 25 during the 1967-1968 timeframe, (b)(6) heard a report from members of the 458th Company that an aircraft had crashed at kilometer marker 54, of Route 20, near Ca Roong Hamlet, Thuong Trach Village, Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province. The aircraft was described as an AD-6 (A-1) and the remains of an aviator were in the plane. (b)(6) never visited the site and did not know about any associated grave; however, he identified (b)(6) a former 458th Company member, as a person who had visited the crash site and viewed the aviator's remains. (b)(6) resides in Ngai Tri Hamlet, Liem Tuyen Village, Thanh Liem District, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam. (Analyst Note: Both the Case 1105 and Case 1329 loss incidents involved F-4 aircraft. The aircraft involved in the Case 0761 incident was a T-28, an aircraft very similar in appearance to an A-1 aircraft). (Ref: RIT AIR for 83rd JFA, 122154Z Dec 05)

**August 2010, Joint Field Activity 10-4VM (100th JFA):** An investigation team interviewed (b)(6) a 458th Company veteran, who provided information concerning the November 1967 crash of an aircraft and his subsequent observation of the body of an American pilot near Route 20, in Quang Binh Province. The hope was that his information might correlate with case 1329. It clearly did not. (b)(6) served in the Co Roong Ford area (48Q XE 279 171) until March 1968. He was not present in that area at the time of the case 1329 loss incident, his information possibly correlates with another case (b)(6) (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 132339Z Oct 2010)

(b)(3):50 USC §  
435 Note Sec  
1082 P.L. 102-190

**May 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA):** The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 280th Air Defense Regiment, (b)(6) and (b)(6). Both individuals provided information that correlates to Case 1329.

- (b)(6) who (b)(6) the 105th AAA Battalion, witnessed an F-4 shot down on 25 November 1968 and saw both pilots eject. One parachute landed near the 1st Company's 37mm AAA battery. Personnel from this battery left their position to capture the pilot. (b)(6) was in a vehicle approaching the position when a bomb strike killed the captured pilot, and (b)(6) was wounded. The pilot, a 1st Lieutenant, was buried several hours later at the location where he died, near the eastern edge of Route 20. Three days after the incident, a PAVN photographer requested the remains be exhumed so he could take pictures. The body was then reburied in its original location. (b)(6) knows the burial site and is willing to point it out to a future joint team. (b)(6) sent three soldiers from the Battalion HQ to capture the second pilot, reportedly a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). This pilot was killed the next morning when he resisted capture and his body was not buried. (b)(6) has never been to the crash site or the location where the second pilot was killed, although he was given a map taken from the slain pilot, which he turned over to the joint team. The map is a 1:250,000 scale U.S. DoD Escape & Evasion Chart (EVC) inscribed "souvenir" at 1400 on 26 November 1968 (Mau Than) at kilometer 54, Ka Rong, Route 20, shot down one F-4H and captured two bandit pilots. This is the map of the Lieutenant Colonel staff officer (sic) who was shot and killed on the spot by the capturing group (600 meters west of the road as the bird flies). C1-D105-E280 (signature illegible) [Note; C1-D105-E280 translates as 1st Company, 105th Battalion, 280th Regiment]

- (b)(6) was a communications soldier attached to the 280th AAA Regimental HQ and observed the shoot down of the aircraft by the Regimental observation station. he saw both parachutes and estimated



that one landed near kilometer marker 51 on Route 20 and the second landed near kilometer 54.5 (sic), on Route 20. He heard (primarily from (b)(6)) that the first parachute was that of a Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed resisting capture and the second was a First Lieutenant who died in a bomb strike and was buried where he fell. (b)(6) knows the second burial site (of the First Lieutenant), located 20-30 meters east of Route 20 and was willing to point it out to a joint team. He does not know the location where the Lieutenant Colonel was killed, and he never went to the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA), 250350Z Jun 13)

**August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA):** The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 103rd Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment concerning Case 1329. (b)(6) a former gunner in the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, described his discovery of an intact human skeleton in September 1969. The remains were in close proximity to an F-4 crash site, approximately 300-400 meters northwest of Route 20, near the Co Roong ford in Quang Binh Province. He left the remains where they lay.

(b)(6) related his first-hand observation of the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft in November 1968 near kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Quang Binh Province. He observed one parachute clearly and a second parachute that opened at a lower altitude and may not have fully deployed. (b)(6) heard that the body of one crewman was buried near Route 20. He heard that the second crewman was shot and killed while resisting capture and may not have been buried. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during 13-4VM (112th JFA), 210800Z Oct 13)

**March 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-2VM (114th JFA):** The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) met with (b)(6) and former (b)(6) of the 5th Squad, 5th Platoon, 5th Volunteer Youth Company, serving under the command of the 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14). (b)(6) related that on a day in probably August of 1968, his squad was located a few hundred meters west of Route 20, in the vicinity of the Ca Roong ford (48Q XE 279 171 (India Thai datum)) when they heard gunfire to the south and witnessed a stricken aircraft heading in their direction. They saw one pilot eject and ran to the area to capture him. They found him on a ridge (XE 270 173) with his helmet off, parachute still clipped on, and talking on a hand-held radio. They captured him, took his gear and were intending to turn him over to a formal military unit when they were forced to take cover as U.S. aircraft began bombing the area. When the bombing ceased after a few minutes, they emerged from cover to discover the pilot had been killed by the bombing. They buried him in a fresh bomb crater 6-7 meters away. They supposedly did not report the capture or death of the pilot to higher headquarters. (b)(6) said they visited the actual aircraft crash site two or three days later (indicated as near the southeast corner of grid square XE 27 20), and although they saw no other body, they noticed a "terrible stench" of decomposition suggesting that another body was nearby. (b)(6) named two other individuals from his youth group who were with him during the incident: (b)(6) and a (b)(6) (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 070723Z May 14)

**June 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-3VM (115th JFA):** An investigation team re-interviewed (b)(6) (b)(6) age 81, former (b)(6) of the 105th AAA Battalion, Group 559, and (b)(6) age 65, former communications soldier of 47th Company, 280th Air Defense Regiment. Three other potential witnesses, (b)(6) and (b)(6) were unavailable for interview. Both PAVN veterans provided accounts consistent with their interviews during JFA 13-3VM; new insights from (b)(6) being that he recalled the time of incident as 1400 hours, that he saw red and green parachutes leave the stricken aircraft, and that the lieutenant had his right leg broken when captured. He recalled this pilot as being very young, large build, with yellow hair, light skin, and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit. (b)(6) subordinates surrendered this pilot's ID media, papers, and radio he had been carrying, which (b)(6) subsequently sent back to 260th Regimental headquarters. This pilot was buried in his



uniform and boots, in a 60 centimeters deep grave, at the only flat area east of Route 20, with a dirt mound resulting over the grave. (b)(6) stated that the exhumation conducted in order for a photographer to take pictures of the body, occurred five days later, rather than the three days that he cited during JFA 13-3VM, and he asserted that the body was reburied in the same grave. The only new insights he offered into the disposition of the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed, was that he recalled him as being of large build, white skin and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit, and that (b)(6) subordinates did not attempt to bury or cover that crewman after killing him.

New insights provided by (b)(6) were that the aircraft had been shot down by AAA fire, and burst into flames. He recalled hearsay accounts of the captured lieutenant having two broken legs. (b)(6) further specified that the bomb that killed the American lieutenant and injured (b)(6) was a cluster bomb.

The team conducted a pedestrian/subsurface search of a 40 by 20 meter area of the alleged burial site (48Q XE 27679 17075, site # VM03267) using metal detectors, but was unable to find any evidence of remains, personal effects, or a burial. Shrubs and elephant grass cover the area, but it had at one time been cultivated for corn, and in 2012, the adjacent Provincial Highway 20 (wartime Route 137) had been widened and paved. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During JFA 14-3VM, 022119Z Sep 14)

**August 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-4VM (116th JFA):** The Research and Investigation Team re-interviewed (b)(6) and interviewed (b)(6). A third desired witness, (b)(6) was unavailable for interview.

(b)(6) a former 37mm AAA gunner of 9th Company, 103rd AAA Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment, provided hearsay information about an F-4 shoot down which correlated to resolved Case 1253. He provided additional information on one other F-4 crash site near the Ca Roong River (Thuong Trach district; Quang Binh province). None of (b)(6) information correlated to Case 1329.

(b)(6) recalled that on an unknown date during the 1968 dry season [standardly runs from November - April], while stationed at the A Ky ford, he heard a AAA battery open fire and witnessed an F-4 trailing fire and smoke, heading in his direction, from the north. He witnessed one parachute emerge from the aircraft and with his squad, ran to the area to capture the pilot. They found the pilot sitting and talking on his hand-held radio. He was described as Caucasian, dark hair, neatly trimmed sideburns, with his left thigh soaked in blood, and his name tag ended with (b)(6). The pilot reportedly surrendered, once threatened with weapons. They began to take the pilot down the ridge to their position when other aircraft began to bomb the area. They pushed the pilot down and took cover. After the bombing, they emerged from cover to find that the pilot had been killed - suffered a large wound to the chest. They then dragged the pilot's body 20 meters upslope and buried him with his equipment in a bomb crater less than one meter deep. He was placed head up slope (west) in the grave and a small dirt mound piled over him, yet the grave was not marked. They reportedly did not formally report the death and burial. Approximately 10 days later, on patrol near the area, (b)(6) and his squad encountered a terrible stench in the area. (b)(6) cannot remember the names of any other members of his squad. He later heard that someone from the Quang Binh provincial militia headquarters exhumed a body for photographs but did not know if it was the body he had buried a few weeks prior. (b)(6) identified a 20 by 20 meter area encompassing a dirt mound which he said was similar to the one where he had buried the pilot (48Q XE 27630 16411). (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 282041Z Oct 14)

**March 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-2VM (118th JFA):** The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed five witnesses of the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14.

- (b)(6) was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the



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(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

capture and subsequent burial of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. The American was a field grade officer who was accidentally killed by a U.S. airstrike. (b)(6) helped bury the American on a hillside near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. (b)(6) identified a photograph of the remains of (b)(6) as the individual he helped bury. - On 25 November 1968, at approximately 1200-1300 hours, while stationed in the Ca Roong area (vicinity 48Q XE 271 171) of western Quang Binh Province, (b)(6) witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. The burning aircraft crashed near the waterfall at Ca Roong and two crewmembers parachuted from the plane. One of the two crewmembers, a Lieutenant Colonel, landed near (b)(6) position. He and (b)(6) who was a member of a volunteer youth unit, quickly went to capture the American. When they found him, they saw he was severely injured, with both thighs broken just below the groin. The pilot was caucasian, weighed approximately 90 kilograms, and was 1.8-1.9 meters tall. He surrendered immediately and said in Vietnamese that he should be taken to Hanoi.

(b)(6) took the pilot's pistol and radio so he could not signal search and rescue forces. By this time, several members of the anti-aircraft unit that shot down the aircraft arrived at the pilot's location. The group confiscated items including survival gear from the pilot's seat kit and a parachute. (b)(6) did not know what became of these items. In anticipation that SAR forces would attempt to rescue the two downed pilots, (b)(6) unit arranged itself in hastily dug fortifications encircling the downed pilot in order to ambush U.S. aircraft when they arrived. Approximately two hours later, a helicopter flew into the area and hovered over the pilot. The pilot and the helicopter crew established visual contact with each other and the helicopter lowered a line to the pilot. Someone from (b)(6) unit opened fire on the helicopter, which then flew away. (b)(6) unit remained in concealment anticipating U.S. aircraft to return. Shortly thereafter, AD-6 [A-1 Skyraider] aircraft strafed the area with rockets. After the rocket attack, (b)(6) and members of his unit came out of hiding and discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket attack, with a fatal wound to the back of his head. BT-14 authorities ordered the burial of the pilot, and a PAVN photo-journalist photographed the body (still in his flight suit) prior to the burial. Members of (b)(6) combat engineer unit along with some of the AAA unit members buried the pilot in a meter-deep hole, some three meters from where the pilot was killed. The pilot was buried clad only in a white t-shirt and boxer shorts. Approximately 10 days later, the body was briefly exhumed for another photograph and then reburied. The grave was located on the side of a hill, south of Ca Roong, approximately 100 meters above Route 20, between kilometer markers 52 and 53. (b)(6) believes he could still find the grave and is willing to assist a Joint Team in this effort.

- (b)(6) had only hearsay information concerning the other U.S. crewmember. The unit involved with this pilot was the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, (as opposed to (b)(6) 2nd Battalion). The two battalions were only 20-30 meters apart, but separated by a small stream. His unit heard over the radio from the 1st Battalion that the other pilot was a Second Lieutenant who landed north of Ca Roong, near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. His parachute had become entangled in a tree and he was already dead when the 1st Battalion members found him. (b)(6) had no further details concerning this pilot or his burial.

- (b)(6) provided credible hearsay information about the American field grade officer killed and buried near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. Though he did not view the body or participate in the burial, he was stationed in the area for six years and knew the grave location. - He confirmed this incident as the same one described by (b)(6) although he described the downed aircraft as an F-105. He heard that one of the pilots, a Second Lieutenant, landed near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. The other pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel who landed on a hill between km markers 52 and 53 of Route 20. The 5th Company received orders to capture this pilot, but because (b)(6) was the platoon leader, he stayed in place and detailed (b)(6) to capture the American. The pilot was wounded in the legs and subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. The pilot was later buried 100 meters above Route 20. A week or so later, the dead pilot was exhumed for photographs and then reburied. Although (b)(6) did not participate in the burial or reburial, he knew the grave's location, having seen it many times while stationed in the area. He is willing to assist a joint team in relocating the grave.

- (b)(6) was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. (b)(6)



information corroborated that of (b)(6) and (b)(6) concerning the Lieutenant Colonel pilot on the hillside, subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. Hw was a participant in the exhumation and reburial of one of the U.S. field grade pilot. He believes he can still find the grave and is willing to assist a joint team in a search to locate the remains.

- (b)(6) was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the capture of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. She did not participate in the burial and did not believe she could assist in finding the grave location.

- (b)(6) was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and he viewed one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. He did not participate in the burial and did not believe he could assist in finding the grave location. He did, however, positively identify a photograph of (b)(6) as the U.S. crewmember he saw.

(b)(3);50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

(Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-2VM, 100741z Apr 15)

**May 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-3VM (119th JFA):** A joint team re-interviewed (b)(6)

(b)(6) and (b)(6). All three witnesses reiterated their testimonies from JFA 15-2VM and then accompanied the Joint Team to the incident location. (b)(6) was able to identify a 24 by 14 meter area as the probable burial site (48Q XE 267 164). A survey of the area revealed no discernable evidence of a burial. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-3VM, 071755Z Oct 15)

**May - June 2016, JFA 16-3VM: Summary of Excavation:** From 30 May through 19 June 2016, during JFA 16-3VM (123rd JFA), Recovery Team Two (RT2) excavated REFNO 1329 (Site VM 03299, MGRS (WGS-84; 48Q XE 27683 16411), in the vicinity of THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province, S.R.V. At Site VM-03299, one primary witness reconfirmed one of the alleged burial locations provided by multiple witnesses. RT2 excavated approximately 128 square meters at approximate depths ranging from 80-140 cm and recovered, photographed, but did not retain, numerous pieces of bomb fragments and possible aircraft wreckage. RT2 also visited and surveyed Site VM-03267 (48Q XE 27683 17072; WGS-84 Datum), another witness indicated a second alleged burial location associated with a possible crewmember of REFNO 1329.

On 19 June 2016, the Recovery Leader suspended operations at Site VM-03299 and recommended further excavation to exhaust this location. Future team must negotiate and get approved for the implementation of machine excavation and increase the wet screening capacity and associated displacement of sediment which were limited during this JFA. This will significantly improve the progress at both locations. The detailed DPAA Laboratory Search and Recovery report number is CIL 2016-127-R. Current site status: Site VM-03299, open-general. Site VM-03267, pending excavation-general.

Material Evidence: No ID media or personal effects recovered. RT4 photographed but did not retain the following items: miscellaneous, nondiagnostic aircraft wreckage.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technician comments: no ordnance recovered at Site VM-03299. [MSG DTG: 061953Z JUL 16, SUB: Excavation Summary Report of REFNO 1329 (Site VM-03299) Conducted During Joint Field Activity 16-3VM (123rd JFA)]

**August-September 2016, Excavation Summary Report, JFA 16-4VM (124th JFA):** From 14 August through 8 September 2016, during JFA 16-4VM (124th JFA), Recovery Team Two (RT2) excavated a burial site associated with REFNO 1329 (Site VM-03299), in the vicinity of THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. RT2 excavated approximately 224 square meters at approximate



depths ranging from 45-100 cm and recovered and photographed, but did not retain, numerous pieces of bomb fragments and possible aircraft wreckage. RT2 recovered no evidentiary materials at Site VM-03299. On 8 September 2016, the Recovery Leader (RL) suspended recovery operations due to the end of the JFA, and recommended it will take at least two JFAs to complete excavations at both sites under REFNO 1329. RT2 also surveyed Site VM-03267 (48Q XE 27683 17072, WGS-84 Datum), another reported burial location associated with a possible crewmember of REFNO 1329. The detailed DPAA Laboratory (Lab) Search and Recovery Report number is 2016-173. Current Site Status: Open-General.

The team interviewed one witness who provided new information pertaining to Case 1329, (b)(6) (b)(6) who lives on-site (VM-03267), in a new residence less than one year old. (b)(6) was not yet born at the time of the incident. He currently owns and lives on the property at the site. (b)(6) helped the RL relocate markers established during JFA 14-3VM. Recent construction has impacted the site. (b)(6) did not see any incident-related materials during the construction process on the property.  
[MSG DTG: 202008Z APR 17, SUB: Excavation Summary Report of REFNO 1329 (Site VM-03299) Conducted During Joint Field Activity 16-4VM (124<sup>th</sup> JFA)]

**November 2016, DRI from JFA 17-1VM (125th JFA):** Summary of investigation: On 18 November 2016 during JFA 17-1VM (125th JFA), the Research and Investigation Team Bravo (RIT-B) investigated Case 1329 in Thuong Trach Village, Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province. Neither the homeowner nor the first-hand witnesses were available at the time of the investigation; however, the VNOSMP permitted the RIT-B to survey the alleged burial location without the homeowner permission. RIT-B surveyed a 15 x-15-meter area, which revealed no evidence of remains, identification (ID) media, or U.S. wartime activity. RIT-B found that the overall site has been compromised due to construction of a dwelling by the landowner. According to the Provincial VNOSMP, the location of the alleged burial within the site has not been disturbed; however, it is in eminent threat of future house construction and development by the landowner. Possible remains/material evidence/identification (ID) media: RIT-B did not recover or receive any material evidence, possible remains, or ID media while investigating Case 1329.

On 4 November 2016, RIT-B met with the VNOSMP contingent at the Intercontinental Hotel in Hanoi City to discuss the investigation plan. The VNOSMP team leader informed RIT-B that the two requested witnesses were not available for interview and the landowner was avoiding contact with the VNOSMP and RIT-B.

On 18 November 2016, RIT-B departed the previously scheduled case location and drove five minutes south to Case 1329 vehicle dismount point (VDP) [48Q XE 27704 17097]. After arriving at the site, RIT-B discovered that the homeowner was not home and he put a padlock on the gate in an effort to keep the team out. After discussing the matter with the VNOSMP Team Leader, (b)(6) permitted the team to conduct a survey without the homeowner's permission. Since the first-hand witnesses were not available, (b)(6) (Quang Binh Province Official) pointed out the alleged burial location. (b)(6) was one of the Province officials present during JFA 14 3VM (Ref B); however, his name is not listed in any of the previous reports for Case 1329. RIT-B discovered that the previous original site survey reference point established during JFA 14-3VM (48Q XE 27679 17075) was removed by the homeowner. RIT-B selected a new site survey reference point by using a road sign outside the fence (48Q XE 27708 17097). RIT-B then conducted a 15-x-15-meter pedestrian survey using one CHIA metal detector which reveals possible bomb fragments and small arms casings. The team did not locate any remains, personal effects or life support material. RIT-B verified that the site has been affected by construction of a house.

Site survey results:



CARIS site number: VM-03267.  
Site survey reference point: 48Q XE 27708 17097.  
Map grid coordinates: 48Q XE 27691 17104.  
Site description and considerations:  
Site type: Alleged burial site.  
Site size: 15-x-15 meters.

Analyst comments: The VNOSMP Team Leader allowed RIT-B to survey the site (VM 03267) even though the landowner, (b)(6) was not present. The landowner erected a barbed wire fence with padlocked gate surrounding the site. He also removed the old datum marker. According to the VNOSMP team, the landowner did not remove any dirt during construction of the dwelling, but rather used it to extend his habitable space and level the building site out. The VNOSMP team believed that the landowner used an excavator to move dirt from the hillside and then place it around the site.

The VNOSMP Team Leader stated that no remains, personal effects, or material evidence was discovered during the construction. (b)(6) of the VNOSMP, pointed out the alleged burial area to the team (22 meters northwest from the datum (48Q XE 27708 17097). He stated that he was with the witness during the last visit; however, a witness search in the DPAA database could not locate (b)(6) as a member of the provincial official among any of the previous list of Province official names.

There is a generator under a temporary cover nearby which could indicate more permanent construction by the landowner in the near future. The VNOSMP Team Leader stated that the owner of the home is avoiding the RIT B and VNOSMP team due to fear of losing home. Site VM-03267 is under threat due to the landowner's efforts to keep the team out and the fact that the landowner continues to modify the site.  
[MSG DTG: 290010Z APR 17, SUB: Detailed Report of Investigation of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 17-1VM (125th JFA)]

**August 2017, Excavation Summary Report from JFA 17-4VM (128<sup>th</sup> JFA):** From 10-24 August 2017, during JFA 17-4VM, Recovery Team Two (RT2) excavated **Site VM-03299**, an alleged burial site associated with REFNO 1329 in the vicinity of THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. Under the supervision and scientific direction of a DPAA Scientific Recovery Expert (SRE), the team excavated approximately 129 square meters (cumulative of approximately 481 square meters over three JFAs) to depths ranging up to 140 cm below surface. On 24 August 2017, the SRE terminated recovery operations because the excavation has exhausted the archaeological limits of the witness-identified area. No evidentiary items were recovered during this field activity. The forthcoming search and recovery report was assigned the tracking number CIL 2017-304-R by the DPAA-Lab. RT2 recovered and photographed but did not retain: non-incident-related materials, including bomb fragments, oxidized metals, ceramic materials, prehistoric stone tool debris, and recent materials from previous JFAs. At this time, field assessment of the materials does not provide any further information regarding the association of this site and the REFNO 1329 incident. The **VM-03299** alleged burial site has been excavated to its fullest reasonable extent, and no further excavation is recommended. **Site status: Closed-General.**  
[MSG DTG: 192343Z OCT 17, SUB: Excavation Summary Report of Site VM-03299 (REFNO 1329) Conducted During Joint Field Activity 17-4VM (128th JFA) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam]

**August-September 2017, Excavation Summary Report from JFA 17-4VM (128<sup>th</sup> JFA):** From 10 August to 5 September 2017, during JFA 17-4VM, Vietnamese Recovery Team 1 (VRT1) excavated **Site VM-03267**, a burial site associated with REFNO 1329 in the vicinity of THUONG TRUK Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. Under the supervision and scientific direction of a DPAA Scientific



Recovery Expert (SRE), the team excavated approximately 98 square meters to depths of 85 to 155 cm below the surface. On 5 September 2017, the SRE suspended recovery operations due to the end of the field activity and recommended further work at the site. No evidentiary items were recovered during this field activity. The forthcoming detailed excavation report was assigned the tracking number CIL 2017-306-R by the DPAA-Lab. VRT1 recovered and photographed but did not retain: bomb fragments, local detritus, anti-aircraft shell casings, and unexploded ordnance. This ordnance included one unknown bomb fuse, and two 37mm projectiles, all of which were deposited in a UXO pit off-site. Recommendations: **Site VM-03267** has **not** been excavated to the fullest reasonable scientific extent, and further excavation is therefore recommended. Due to the depths required in reaching incident-sterile sediments, the site likely requires two or more JFAs. **Site status: Open-General.**

[MSG DTG: 192352Z OCT 17, SUB: Excavation Summary Report of Site VM-03267 (REFNO 1329) Conducted During JFA 17-4VM (128<sup>th</sup> JFA) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam]

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

### **Southeast Asia Government Unilateral Information/Investigations**

**PHOTOS:** Numerous photos have been received for this case, the most important depicting [REDACTED] intact remains. Another showed identification media for both men. Vietnamese information identified several photos showing the aircraft wreckage from this incident.

**MUSEUM:** 280th Air Defense Museum had data plate with a receipt, both alleged to come from this incident. Pistol at this museum correlated to [REDACTED] by serial number. Also a possible flight checklist.

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**MUSEUM:** The Central Army Museum in Hanoi had a museum item receipt and data plate said to belong to aircraft shot down 23 November 1968 in western Quang Binh. Data plate is for F-4 -- probably relates to Case 1327. Air Defense Museum had signal flare receipt for which identifies it with this aircraft.

**RECORDS:** 1. The Military Region 4 shoot down record cited Case 1329 aircraft as being downed by Battalion 73, 280th Air Defense Regiment, at Co Roong Ford, on Route 20. No indication on fate of crew.  
2. Quang Binh list of U.S. casualties notes both men and that their bodies were buried at Kilometer 54, Route 20.  
3. Military Region 4 'Killed and Torn Apart' roster says both remains obliterated, implying failure to recover the remains; should not be taken as a literal description.  
4. 1978 central government list of remains not recovered says both men's graves were lost.

**RECORDS:** V95C3B8. Vietnamese reports on the 84 Special Remains Team Cases, provided to the U.S. on 13 May 1995. Report recommends determining unit and troops stationed in this area in 1968 and finding and interviewing retired militia members who have experience with Quang Binh and Bo Trach teams.

**REPORT OF UNILATERAL INVESTIGATION, PROVIDED 24 JUNE 1996:** VNOSMP noted that [REDACTED] (b)(6) [REDACTED] (b)(6) If they can organize and ensure safe passage for him, will try to get him to the site and help search for the graves. Said only military and youth assault teams were stationed in this area during the war. These units moved frequently, were replaced, or were subsequently dispersed. Many have died, and the youth assault groups have disbanded. (Ref: JTF-FA, 100712Z Sep 96)

**OCTOBER 1996, MEETING WITH VNOSMP ON UNILATERAL REQUESTS:** VNOSMP reported that in cases where they had been asked to search for veterans from the 280th Air Defense Regiment, including



Case 1329, that the Vietnamese and the U.S. have attempted to locate records from this unit. VNOSMP had returned to the unit to search for more records but found nothing. VNOSMP recommended against returning to this unit but instead concentrate continued investigation in other areas.

**JUNE 1997, REPORT OF UNILATERAL VIETNAMESE INVESTIGATION:** The VNOSMP followed up on information from a former military officer in Quang Binh Province (b)(6) who had identified a potential source who might be able to identify former members of Youth Assault Groups that had served in the province. These units were made up of young men and women who supported the military, often by building, maintaining, and repairing strategic roads. The VNOSMP reported that the witness (b)(6) identified (b)(6) could not help, but (b)(6) recommended talking to (b)(6) the (b)(6) (b)(6) of the province youth association. (b)(6) had been interviewed unsuccessfully in May 1997, as per joint investigation section narrative above.) (REF: MSG DTG 100712Z SEP 96)

**VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY ARCHIVES:** In 1999-2000, U.S. researchers re-inventoried the photos of the Vietnam News Agency. They found seven photos related to this case, copies of the photos described above.

**VIETNAMESE HISTORY:** 1999 history of Route 20 (Duong 20 Quyet Thang), p. 140 identifies youth assault (thanh nien xung phong--TNXP) groups operating in the area. Company 23 TNXP Ha Tinh was at Ca Roong. Company 25 TNXP Nam Ha was at Kilometer 68. See p. 160, which identifies (b)(6) (b)(6) as (b)(6) of Phaaux Thuaatj 2 at Kilometer 68.

**Joint Field Activity 13-1VM (109th JFA):** The Vietnamese Advance Work (AW) Team interviewed 48 veterans of Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14) who did not provide any information relating to Case 1329. The team also interviewed two veterans of the 280th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Regiment who provided specific, detailed information that correlates to Case 1329. (b)(6) and (b)(6) provided detailed information on the aircraft shoot down, and the ejection of both pilots. They reported the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) resisted capture and was shot and killed during the capture attempt. The First Lieutenant crewman was successfully captured, but was killed by U.S. aircraft bombing the area to suppress the anti-aircraft fire in order to facilitate a rescue attempt. At least one of the two individuals indicated he could be of assistance in locating the burial site of the U.S. Lieutenant. (more detailed information included in Joint Information section 05/13, 13-3VM / 111th JFA) (Ref; Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Concerning Case 1329, dtg 300708z Jan 13)

**June 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA):** The Vietnamese Advance Work Team interviewed four individuals who provided information relating to Case 1329;

- (b)(6) while serving as the (b)(6) of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 on 25 or 26 November 1968. He identified the 1st Company, 105th Battalion as the unit responsible for the shoot down, and after hearing that one of the crew had been captured, was en route to the area when he heard that the captured pilot had been killed. This information was passed to him by two members of a volunteer youth unit, (b)(6) and (b)(6)

- (b)(6) a former member of the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, related that while his unit was stationed at kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Thuong Trach village (Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province) in approx. February 1969, he and other soldiers from his unit discovered the wreckage of an F-4 aircraft 300 meters northwest of Route 20. About 20 meters from the tail of the aircraft, they found intact skeletal remains, with a pair of "American-style" boots. The skull contained intact teeth, three of which were gold. The did not discover any clothing or personal effects, although they did find a green parachute hung up atop a clump of bamboo. The remains were left unburied and (b)(6) did not



hear of anyone else ever burying them. He then related information of another incident that occurred during November-December 1968 near the Xuan Son Ferry (48Q XE 387 479) in which an F-4 was shot down and two pilots were captured and one later died. He directly witnessed the shoot down of the F-4, with both pilots ejecting. He later heard that both of the pilots were captured (one reportedly being an Australian and one an American). The American was said to have been shot and wounded while violently resisting capture. Three days later, while the two prisoners were being escorted to the Regiment, the American pilot died of his wounds and was buried near a lime kiln in the vicinity of Chot hamlet, Son Trach village (south of the Trooc River and southwest of the Xuan Son Ferry).

- (b)(6) of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, (interviewed by the RIT Team during the 109th JFA - see the Joint Investigations entry) reconfirmed that he was a participant to the capture and burial of the 1st Lieutenant who was shot down in an F-4 on 25 November 1968.

- (b)(6) former member of the 47th Communications Company, 280th AAA Regiment, had only second-hand hearsay information about the F-4 shoot down, capture, death and burial of one pilot, as related to him by (b)(6)

- Site Surveys:

- (b)(6) could not accurately determine the location where he found aircraft wreckage and remains in February 1969.

- (b)(6) after much deliberation, was able to determine the burial location for the deceased 1st Lt, approx. 250 meters from the stream ford, "next to" Rt. 20, near the position of the 1st Co., 105th Bn identifying the site as located at 48Q XE 27688 17061.

- Note: Joint teams have identified and correlated the 1329 crash site at 48Q XE 277 179, approximately 300 meters northwest of the nearest section of Route 20. (b)(6) account of discovery of aircraft wreckage and remains appears to correlate with the Case 1329 pilot (b)(6), while (b)(6) account appears to correlate with the Case 1329 backseater (1Lt Francisco). (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report - Case 1329, 090241Z Oct 13)

(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA):** The Vietnamese Advance Work Team located and interviewed 14 veterans of the Thanh Hoa Volunteer Youth Group and an additional 12 veterans of the 280th AAA Regiment, none of whom were able to provide any information on the Case 1329 loss incident. (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 070722Z Jan 14)

**December 2014, Joint Field Activity 15-1VM (117th JFA):** The VNOSMP team interviewed three veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group attached to the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, PAVN Binh Tram 14 (BT14). (A Binh Tram was a North Vietnamese military way station on the Ho Chi Minh Trail.)

- (b)(6) provided hearsay information concerning the death of both U.S. pilots associated with the case. He claimed to know the area of the burial of one of the pilots. (b)(6) recalled that around midday in 1968-1969, 12.7mm and 37mm AAA units subordinate to BT14, shot down an F-4. Two pilots ejected near the Ca Roong ford along Route 20. One caucasian pilot, possibly a captain, landed on a hill, one kilometer from the Ca Roong ford in the direction of Pha Long Dai. (b)(6) heard that the pilot was killed on the spot and buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. He did not personally know the burial location of this pilot. The other pilot, a major, suffered a broken leg and landed near his unit's position. (b)(6) unit was ordered to capture the pilot, but was unable to do so, as he was killed by U.S. aircraft rocket strikes. Volunteer youth and AAA soldiers buried the pilot. (b)(6) did not participate in the burial, but knew of the area of the pilot's grave.

- (b)(6) and (b)(6) both veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group, provided first-hand information concerning their participation in the capture, death, and burial of one of the U.S. pilots, and also provided hearsay information on another. They recalled the midday shoot down of an F-105 (sic) by the 27mm/12.7mm AAA unit attached to BT14. The aircraft crashed at the Ca Roong ford and the two



pilots ejected, died, and were buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. One pilot ejected and died while suspended in the top of a tree in the area of Km 49, north of the ford. The pilot was a Second Lieutenant and caucasian. Personnel of Volunteer Youth unit 115, Team 263, along with soldiers from BT14's 12.7mm AAA unit buried the pilot. (b)(6) did not participate in this burial, but knows the location of the grave. The other pilot was caucasian and a Lieutenant Colonel landed next to (b)(6) unit's positions. The pilot was seriously injured with two broken legs, but was able to use his survival radio to contact rescue forces. (b)(6) and (b)(6) approached the pilot, pulled down his parachute, and confiscated his handgun, knife, and other personal equipment. Seven soldiers from the light AAA unit assisted (b)(6) and (b)(6) in the capture. They claimed that a U.S. rescue helicopter approached the injured pilot and lowered a rope ladder, but because of his broken legs, the pilot was unable to climb up. The PAVN forces fired on the helicopter and forced it to depart. The Vietnamese retreated to a combat trench some 50-100 meters away as AD-6 [A-1 Skyraiders] attacked the Vietnamese held positions. When the airstrikes were over, the Vietnamese discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket strikes. (b)(6) and (b)(6) participated in the burial of the pilot's body. About 10 days later, the pilot's body was exhumed for photographs and then reburied in the same spot. (Ref: Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 110712Z Mar 15)

**August 2015, Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report, JFA 15-3VM (119th JFA):** The following is a translation of the Advance Work Report for Case 1329.

---Begin Translation---

RIT - 119th JFA

Results of the Advance Work Investigation of Case 1329 / QUANG BINH Province

Investigation Results this JFA: During Advance Work on the 119th JFA, VNOSMP specialists located and interviewed veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group (from THANH HOA) and the 280th Regiment for information concerning Case 1329.

Witness One, (b)(6), resides in Hamlet 8, QUANG VONG Village, QUANG XUONG District, THANH HOA Province. (b)(6) was born in 1954 and entered service in 1971, assigned to the 25th Volunteer Youth Unit. From March 1971 to September 1972, he was assigned to the 25th Volunteer Youth of BINH TRAM 14 (BT14), and from October 1972 to October 1974, the 25th Engineer Battalion, BT14 in QUANG BINH Province.

(b)(6) provided the following MIA-related information: In the morning on an unrecalled day in April 1972, at kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 of BT14, a wounded Caucasian pilot was taken to BT14 by unidentified PAVN soldiers. At the time, (b)(6) was a communications soldier of the 25th Engineer Bn of BT14, and was tasked with receiving the pilot and escorting him to the 25th Bn Medical Station of BT14. (b)(6) along with four other unrecalled soldiers, carried the pilot to the 25th BN Medical Station. The pilot was only at the medical station a short time before he died.

(b)(6) heard the pilot was captured at kilometer marker 61 at the A KI Ford; grid coordinate 48Q XE 261 127.

(b)(6) along with a number of other soldiers, buried the pilot. The pilot was buried at kilometer marker 54, Route 20. The pilot's grave is located at the bottom of the slope about 300 meters from our soldier's graves at the top of the slope.



(b)(6) did not recall the names of the soldiers who carried the wounded pilot to the 25th Bn Medical Station, nor did he recall the names of the soldiers who participated in the burial. (b)(6) and his unit were stationed in the area of the pilot's grave until 1975.

(b)(6) recalled the names of a few 25th Bn officers who knew of this incident including:

1. Mr. TA XUAN MAI, Battalion Commander, from THAI BINH Province (deceased),
2. (b)(6) from HAI LINH Village, TINH GIA District, THANH HOA Province, and
3. (b)(6) from THO XUAN District, THANH HOA Province.

Witness Two, (b)(6), born in 1948, residing in Hamlet 5, DIEN HOA Village, DIEN CHAU District, NGHE AN Province. (b)(6) entered service in 1968. From 1968 to 1972 he was assigned to the 16th Reconnaissance Company (C16), BT14. (b)(6) provided the following MIA-related information:

At the end of 1968, (b)(6) witnessed the shootdown of a U.S. aircraft and the pilot was killed and buried about 300 meters from the TA LE Ford, in LAOS. The body was buried in a bomb crater near the downed aircraft. An engineering unit buried the pilot, but (b)(6) did not recall the unit designator.

Witnesses who had no MIA-related information: (b)(6) and (b)(6)

VNOSMP Observations and Recommendations: VNOSMP specialists interviewed five BT14 veterans for information regarding Case 1329. (b)(6) and (b)(6) provided MIA related information and we have already [previously] interviewed (b)(6). The joint team will interview (b)(6) on a future JFA.

---End Translation---

DPAA-W Analyst Comments: Agree with VNOSMP recommendations.

[MSG DTG: 210505Z APR 16, SUB: Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329 and Laos Case 1698 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-3VM (119th JFA) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam]

**September 2015, Advance Work Report, JFA 15-4VM (118<sup>th</sup> JFA):** The results of unilateral and joint interviews and site surveys during recent JFAs have determined: The witnesses were veterans of the 105<sup>th</sup> Antiaircraft Artillery (AAA) Battalion (BN), 280<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Regiment (REGT) (especially veterans of the 1<sup>st</sup> Company [CO], 105<sup>th</sup> BN, 280<sup>th</sup> REGT), and former members of the volunteer youth from THANH HOA Province) and other units belonging to BT14 (BINH TRAM) 14. Veterans of these units have great potential to assist the joint team to determine the burial sites more exactly.

During the 120<sup>th</sup> RIT JFA, VNOSMP specialists located and interviewed 14 witnesses who were volunteer youth from THANH HOA, and other units of BT14 in order to find information concerning Case 1329. Among the witnesses interviewed were five who provided information concerning Case 1329 and other MIA-related information as follows:

Witness One (1), (b)(6) (born in 1946), and residing in TAN TINH Hamlet, DONG XA Village, DONG HUNG District, THAI BINH Province. (b)(6) enlisted in September 1965



into the 3<sup>rd</sup> CO, 1<sup>st</sup> BN, 36<sup>th</sup> REGT, 320<sup>th</sup> Division (DIV). From February 1966 to November 1970, (b)(6) was a liaison soldier of the 16<sup>th</sup> 12.7 mm AAA CO, 24<sup>th</sup> BN, BT 14, Group 559.

(b)(6) provided MIA-associated information as follows:

First set of information:

In approximately May 1968, (b)(6) unit (directly responsible was (b)(6) presently in THUAN TUY Hamlet, DONG LA Village, DONG HUNG, THAI BINH) shot down an AD-6 [that is, an A-1] aircraft in the area of the CA ROONG Ford, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province (on Route 20). (b)(6) unit organized a search for the downed aircraft. Not until approximately one week later did (b)(6) and his fellow soldiers find that the aircraft had crashed approximately three kilometers from the ford. The bodies of two pilots who died in the aircraft were disintegrated. (b)(6) and his fellow soldiers recovered some war booty (he could not remember specifically what) and handed it over to superiors. (b)(6) and his fellow soldiers buried the bodies of these two pilots at CA FOONG Hamlet. The burial site was approximately ten meters from the aircraft wreckage. These two bodies were buried close together. The persons who participated with (b)(6) in the burial included:

- (b)(6), who at that time was the (b)(6) of the 16<sup>th</sup> CO, 24<sup>th</sup> BN, BT 14. He resides in NHAN HAU Village, LY NHAN District, NAM HA Province [Note: This is actually HA NAM Province].
- (b)(6) presently in DUY TIEN District, HA NAM Province.
- (b)(6) and (b)(6) presently in NHAN HAU Village, LY NHAN District, NAM HA (HA NAM Province).

Second set of information:

In approximately 1967, in the area of the banks of the CA ROONG Stream, NEAR BUT Hamlet, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province, an F-4 aircraft was shot down by (b)(6) unit. The pilot parachuted but was caught in a tree. (b)(6) a soldier from (b)(6) unit (b)(6) only knew that (b)(6) CAN was from HAI DUONG Province) used an AK to shoot the pilot dead; he was buried on the bank of the CA ROONG Stream, NEAR BUT Hamlet, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. (b)(6) recommended we locate and interview:

- (b)(6) (DONG BINH Hamlet, DONG XA Village, DONG HUNG District, THAI BINH Province), and,
- (b)(6) (DONG BINH, DONG XA), to seek additional information concerning this incident.

Witness Two (2), (b)(6) (born in 1946), and residing in THINH VAN Hamlet, QUANG THINH Village, THANH HOA City. (b)(6) enlisted in May 1965, into volunteer youth unit C115-N263. From May 1965 to December 1966, C115-N263 belonged to BT14, Group 559. From January 1967 to September 1969, she was an engineer soldier of the 5<sup>th</sup> CO, 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, BT14, Group 559. In October 1969, she was discharged and returned to her locality.

(b)(6) did not personally witness or participate in the burial of the pilot associated with Case 1329. However, (b)(6) said that when the Case 1329 aircraft was shot down on 25 November 1968, she was performing her mission of protecting the CA ROONG Ford at kilometer marker 50. (b)(6) personally witnessed two pilots parachute. One pilot parachuted to the north of the CA ROONG Ford - the area where the 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer BN was stationed; the other pilot parachuted to the south of the CA ROONG Ford, in the area where the 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer BN was stationed. (b)(6) only knew that the unit sent troops to capture the pilot. The



persons who directly participated in the pursuit, capture, and burial of the pilot included (b)(6) and (b)(6) and (b)(6) have met Vietnam-U.S. joint teams previously.

Witness Three (3), (b)(6) (born in 1946), resides in QUANG THINH Village, THANH HOA City. (b)(6) enlisted in May 1965 into volunteer youth unit C115-N263. From May 1965 to December 1966, C115-N263 belonged to BT14, Group 559. From January 1967 to September 1969, she was an engineer soldier of the 5<sup>th</sup> CO, 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, BT14, Group 559. In October 1969, she was discharged and returned to her locality. (b)(6) provided information similar to that of (b)(6) above.

Witness Four (4), (b)(6) (born in 1944), resides in QUANG THINH Village, QUANG XUONG District, THANH HOA Province. (b)(6) enlisted in May 1965 into volunteer youth unit C115-N263. From May 1965 to December 1966, C115-N263 belonged to BT14, Group 559. From January 1967 to September 1969, he was an engineer soldier of the 5<sup>th</sup> CO, 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, BT14, Group 559. In October 1969, he was discharged and returned to his locality. (b)(6) provided information similar to that of (b)(6) ABOVE.

Witness Five (5), (b)(6) (born in 1947), resides in TAN KHANG Village, NONG CONG District, THANH HOA Province. (b)(6) enlisted in May 1965, into volunteer youth unit C115-N263. From May 1965 to December 1966, C115-N263 belonged to BT14, Group 559. From January 1967 to September 1970, she was an engineer soldier of the 5<sup>th</sup> CO, 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, BT14, Group 559. In October 1969, she was discharged and returned to her locality. (b)(6) provided information similar to that of (b)(6) above.

VNOSMP Observations and Recommendations: Observations: The information provided by (b)(6) (b)(6) is directly associated with the burial of a pilot and should be analyzed to determine association with any unresolved MIA case to have a direction for continued investigation. (b)(6) (b)(6) and (b)(6) did not personally participate in the burial of the pilot involved in Case 1329, but they were witnesses who knew facts about this case. If seen to be necessary, the joint RIT could interview them.

Recommendations: The RIT jointly interview (b)(6) The advance investigation team (RIT) should continue to locate and interview veterans of BT14: volunteer youth, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> BNS of BT14, and other veterans who might know information concerning Case 1329 or other MIA information.

---END TRANSLATION---

DPA West Analyst Comments:

(b)(6) provided information concerning two incidents. The details of neither incident are entirely consistent with any of the several U.S. losses known to have occurred along Route 20 in the area of the CA ROONG Ford (48Q XE 274 175, WGS-84 Datum).

(1) An A-1 shot down in May 1968 near the CA ROONG Ford. (b)(6) and others found the wreckage and buried the bodies of two crewmen. This information possibly correlated with resolved Case 0761, based on time frame, number of crew members involved, and condition of the remains. Resolution of Case 0761 was achieved by identification of remains recovered from the crash site of this aircraft (48Q XE 2710 1682, India-Thailand 1960 Datum; 48Q XE 2668 1712, WGS-84 Datum). (b)(6) stated that he and his fellow soldiers recovered and buried the disintegrated remains of two crewmen. It is possible that the 17<sup>th</sup> JFA excavation of the confirmed Case



0761 site recovered remains from that site which had not been recovered and buried by (b)(6) and the others. Case 0761 involved the 12 July 1967 loss of a T-28D aircraft and its two crewmen. (b)(6) stated the aircraft was an "AD-6" (i.e. an A-1). An A-1 aircraft was normally, but not exclusively, flown by a single pilot. There are no known A-1 losses in the area of the CA ROONG Ford. So, while both the T-28 and A-1 aircraft were propeller-driven, only the T-28 normally carried a crew of two. However, (b)(6) stated that it took his team a week to find the crash site, which lay three kilometers from the CA ROONG

Ford. The Case 0761 crash site lies 516 meters northwest of the Ford. It seems unlikely that soldiers who were familiar with the CA ROONG Ford area would have taken so long to find a crash site lying so close to their position. Another incident in the CA ROONG Ford area involving two crewmen who did not eject from their aircraft prior to impact is Case 1105. Case 1105 involves the 27 March 1968 loss of the crew of an F-4D aircraft. Despite extensive field investigation of several F-4 crash sites in the CA ROONG Ford area, they have not produced a positive identification of the Case 1105 crash site. The general aircraft type (b)(6) provided is inconsistent with Case 1105, but the time frame he provided for this incident is closer to that of Case 1105 than Case 0761. In addition, the length of time (b)(6) and his comrades spent in searching for this crash site, and what they found and did when they got there suggest a possible correlation with Case 1105. Another possible candidate for correlation with (b)(6) information is Case 1243, an F-4 that crashed on 1 August 1968, with the loss of both crewmen, neither of whom was seen to eject prior to the crash. Joint teams have been unable thus far to locate the crash site of this aircraft. However, the wartime loss coordinates (48Q XE 270 206, WGS-84 Datum) lie three kilometers north of the CA ROONG Ford, a location that is consistent with (b)(6) recollection of the site at which he and his team located and buried two remains.

These inconsistencies cannot be resolved without a joint interview of (b)(6). Depending on the results of that interview, a survey of the crash site where he and his comrades buried remains might be necessary.

(2) An F-4 shot down in 1967 near BUT Hamlet. (b)(6) shot one pilot who had ejected from this aircraft and was caught in a tree. The body was buried near BUT Hamlet and the CA ROONG Stream. This INFORMATION POSSIBLY CORRELATED WITH REFNO 1329, based on aircraft type, location, and circumstances of loss. The time frame (b)(6) provided is not consistent with Case 1329. It is also not clear from the VNOSMP report how much of (b)(6) information concerning this incident was based on hearsay rather than direct observation.

Case 1329 involves the 25 November 1968 loss of both crewmen of an F-4D aircraft that was shot down near the CA ROONG Ford. Both crewmen ejected successfully and were in contact with search and rescue forces. Contact with one crewman was lost on the day of the incident, and with the second crewman the following morning. A joint team visited and positively identified the crash site of the Case 1329 aircraft at 48Q XE 272 185 (India Thailand Datum) in 1989. A 2000 joint team, using a Global Positioning System, visited what is probably the same crash site at 48Q XE 2729 182 (India-Thailand Datum). However, by the time this joint team surveyed the site, eleven years after the previous, successful survey, all identifying wreckage had been scavenged. Consequently, it cannot be established definitively that the two sites are the same. The BUT Hamlet mentioned in the report is actually RAO BUT Hamlet, and is located on the left bank of the CA ROONG Stream at 48Q XE 264 183 (WGS-84). RAO BUT Hamlet does not appear on the U.S. wartime map of the area, but was already in existence at this location at the time of the 1989 investigations of Cases 1329 and 0761. Several previous investigations have obtained information indicating that one of the Case 1329 crewmen was captured but killed during a U.S. airstrike, and that the other was shot and killed when he resisted capture. There is conflicting witness information as to which crewman met his end in which set of circumstances. As a result, analysts cannot yet decide which of the two crewmen involved in Case 1329 was reportedly shot and killed by (b)(6). The information is clearly associated with Case 1329, however, and not one of the many other cases that occurred in this



area.

(b)(6) personally observed two crewmen eject from an aircraft near the CA ROONG Ford on 25 November 1968. This information correlated with Case 1329 based on date, location, number of crewmen observed, and circumstances of loss. However, (b)(6) did not personally participate in the subsequent pursuit, capture, and burial of one of the crewmen. She named three persons who did so. All three have already been interviewed by joint teams.

Recommend joint interview of (b)(6). Also recommend VNOSMP attempt to locate and interview (b)(6) of HAI DUONG (City or Province).

[MSG DTG: 050514Z JUL 17, SUB: Translation of Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-4VM (120<sup>th</sup> JFA)]

**April 2016, AW from JFA 16-2VM (122nd JFA):** Summary: During Joint Field Activity (JFA) 16-2VM (122nd JFA), a Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) team conducted Advance Work (AW) for Case 1243 pursuant to U.S. requirements. VNOSMP specialists re-interviewed (b)(6) a former antiaircraft gunner, who provided information concerning two aircraft loss incidents that was almost exactly the same as that he provided in two earlier interviews. His information probably correlates with resolved Case 1253 and with Case 1329-1-01. (b)(6) guided the team to the site where he claimed to have observed aircraft wreckage and remains. It is almost certain that this is the same site previously and positively correlated with Case 1329. The VNOSMP team also sought information from local residents concerning this and other incidents, without success. The VNOSMP team obtained no information concerning Case 1243.

#### Results of this Investigation, Locating and Interviewing Witnesses:

(b)(6) was born in 1949 and resides in YEN GIANG VILLAGE, YEN DINH District, THANH HOA Province. He enlisted in May 1967, and served in the 9th Company (CO), DS Battalion (BN), 280th Regiment (REGT), 367th Division (These were all air defense units, right up to division level). (b)(6) was an antiaircraft artillery gunner. He was discharged and returned to his locality in 1976.

On an afternoon of February 1969, the 9th CO, 103rd BN moved to station at Kilometer 54 of Route 20 in THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. (b)(6) and two fellow unit members (b)(6) could not remember their names) went to collect branches for camouflaging their gun position. They went northwest of provincial Route 20 for approximately 300 meters, then discovered the wreckage of an aircraft that (b)(6) recognized as the F-4 type. The forward part of the aircraft was shattered; the rear was intact. Approximately 20 meters from the tail was intact remains and a pair of high-necked boots of the American type. The skull had intact teeth, three of which were gold. They did not see any clothing or personal effects. In a bamboo clump above the remains there was a green parachute stuck on a bamboo stalk. They left the whole remains in that place, and did not bury them. During the three months that his unit was stationed at Kilometer 54, (b)(6) did not return to the aircraft wreckage location and did not hear that anyone buried those remains.

In approximately May-June 1969, (b)(6) unit moved along Route 20 into Laos, returning in 1973 to be stationed at the LONG DAI Ferry [GC 48Q XE 727 162], in QUANG NINH District, QUANG BINH Province. Throughout the period that followed, (b)(6) never heard anyone in the unit speak about those remains, and paid that matter no further attention.



Besides the above incident, (b)(6) knew about an incident that took place at the end of 1968 associated with an American pilot who died at the XUAN SON Ferry [48Q XE 386 479]. Toward approximately the end of 1968 (November or December 1968), (b)(6) unit was stationed at the XUAN SON Ferry in SON TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. He personally witnessed his unit shoot down an F-4H aircraft. He saw two pilots parachute, and after that he heard that they were captured alive, one Australian pilot and one American.

Because the American pilot resisted, Vietnamese troops forcefully shot and wounded him. Three days later, reconnaissance forces of the unit led the two pilots to transfer them to the regiment. After that, (b)(6) heard that while leading them through the area of CHOT

Hamlet (AKA LANG TROOC, 48Q XE 350 519) in SON TRACH Village, the American pilot died and was buried on the spot. The burial location was near a lime kiln. (b)(6) did not know the burial site precisely, because he only heard about it. (b)(6) also did not know the names of the reconnaissance personnel who buried this American pilot. Approximately three months after that, his unit moved and was stationed at Kilometer 54 of Route 20, so he also did not go to the grave of the American pilot.

The Advance Work Team also sought witnesses who were long-time residents of THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. However, at that time, the usual residents were scattered, in the areas along Route 20. The war was fierce in that area, so the local people were not there. As a result, no one personally witnessed any incidents of aircraft crashes or remains of American pilots.

Survey of the site indicated by the witness: (b)(6) guided the Advance Work Team to Kilometer 54 (which is now Kilometer 51) of Route 20, the place where his unit was stationed in February 1969. From the location of his unit's gun position, (b)(6) determined the position of the aircraft wreckage and remains that he saw during the war. He guided the team to GC 48Q XE 27115 18572 and determined that this was the position where he saw remains that were possibly those of an American pilot. The advance investigation team surveyed and found many small pieces of aircraft wreckage. The site is on a hilltop, covered with natural forest of many trees. At the foot of the hill is a stream with water, approximately 50-70 meters from the site. This area is part of Hamlet 51, THUONG TRACH Village, BO TRACH District, QUANG BINH Province. The Advance Work Team also determined the position of a possible helicopter landing zone at GC 48Q XE 27058 18302.

VNOSMP Observations and Recommendations: The advance investigation team surveyed the site of a crashed aircraft and remains that possibly were those of a pilot according to the information (b)(6) provided. The team did not discover any remains or personal effects; only found aircraft pieces. The Advance Work Team also located and interviewed long time residents near the site area, however there was no one who knew additional information concerning the disposition of the remains associated with Case 1243 or matters associated with missing Americans. People have come to live in the site area. It is very likely that they will clear the forest to make fields, so we need to carry out a joint investigation soon to obtain better results and avoid losing the site. The most suitable time to carry out an investigation or excavation is in the dry season from March until August every year.

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

Field analysts associated (b)(6) information concerning the aircraft wreckage and the remains he discovered with Case (b)(6) based on time frame, location, and information obtained during previous investigations. Based on recent information, in which credible witnesses identified a photograph of Case (b)(6) as that of a body they saw in a different location, DPAA analysts now think (b)(6) information probably correlates with Case 1329-1-01.

(b)(3) 50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190



A crash site associated with the Case 1329 aircraft was surveyed on three occasions prior to the current survey. The crash site has been located by different teams at GC 48Q XE 268 187, 48Q XE 2729 1821, and 48Q XE 27215 18012. The AW team surveyed the present site, finding small pieces of aircraft wreckage, at GC 48Q XE 27115 18572. All four sites lie within 700 meters of each other. [Note: Some of the older grids were converted from India-Thai Datum; and some were taken by map and compass readings. Current grids were taken by GPS. The most distant site was not established with a GPS. It is likely that if that team had a modern GPS they would have obtained a set of coordinates similar to the other three, which are all within the margin of error of GPS Readings. The other three surveys, conducted well after the initial survey, obtained no identifiable aircraft wreckage, because local residents had scavenged the site intensively. It is highly unlikely that the site surveyed during the current AW investigation is associated with any incident other than Case 1329.]

DPAA analysts agree with the VNOSMP team's recommendation that to conduct a joint survey be conducted as soon as possible at the site (b)(6) identified. (b)(6) should guide the joint team to this site and point out the locations at which he saw the tail of the aircraft and the nearly intact remains. [Note: During the August 1989 survey, the stabilizer of the Case 1329 aircraft was still present.] [MSG DTG: 250151Z APR 17, SUB: Translation of Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1243 and 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 16-2VM (122nd JFA)]

(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note  
Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**October 2016, Advance Work Report from JFA 17-1VM:** Originally flagged as pertaining to Cases (b)(6) and 1329, upon reading the information in this report, it contains no information pertinent to Case 1329. [MSG DTG: 010232Z SEP 17, SUB: Translation of Advance Work Report Concerning Case (b)(6) Conducted During Joint Field Activity 17-1VM (125th JFA)]

(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note  
Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**May 2017, Advance Work Report from JFA 17-2VM:** The VNOSMP interviewed 11 veterans of BT14, but none had information concerning Case 1329. [MSG DTG: 270034Z SEP 17, SUB: Translation of Advance Work Report Concerning Cases (b)(6) and 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 17-2VM (126th JFA)]

(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

(b)(3):50 USC § 435 Note Sec 1082 P.L. 102-190

**September 2017, Advance Work Report from JFA 17-4VM (128th JFA):** During Joint Field Activity (JFA) 17-4VM (128th JFA), a Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) team conducted advance work (AW) for Cases (b)(6) and 1329 pursuant to U.S. requirements. The team interviewed 16 veterans of Binh Tram 14 (BT14), three of whom provided information concerning possible U.S. loss incidents. (b)(6) (b)(6) and (b)(6) provided information that possibly correlated with several U.S. loss incidents, including Cases (b)(6) and 1329. However their information was either too limited or contained details that precluded analysts from establishing a firm correlation of their statements with any particular incident. Recommend joint interview of all three veterans.

[MSG DTG: 092351Z JAN 18, SUB: Translation Of Advance Work Report Concerning Cases (b)(6) and 1329 Conducted during Joint Field Activity 17-4VM (128th JFA)]

(b)(3):50 USC §  
435 Note Sec  
1082 P.L. 102-1

(b)(3):50 USC §  
435 Note Sec  
1082 P.L. 102-1

### Knowledgeability Assessment

Vietnam has demonstrated extensive knowledge of this loss, but we have no evidence that officials recovered these men's remains.

### Case Coordination Chronology:

Coordination

Date



A--JOINT EXCAVATE VN (Site 2 VM 03299)(REAFFIRM); AW VN RIT A (BT14 ONGOING)	5/4/2018 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 2 VM 03299)(REAFFIRM); AW VM RIT A (BT14 ONGOING)	1/9/2018 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)(REAFFIRM); AW VM RIT A (BT14 ONGOING)	5/23/2017 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)(REAFFIRM); AW VM RIT A 16-3VM (WITNESSES)	5/16/2016 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)	9/3/2015
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)	6/4/2015 12:38:53 PM
A--US RESEARCH HI (JFA 15-3VM IT1 AND JFA 15-3VM AW VM RIT REPORTS)	1/20/2015 12:38:53 PM
A--US RESEARCH JPAC EDB (SITE 1); JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (15-2VM)(SITE 2)	2/25/2014 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (b)(6)	5/22/2013 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (13-3VM); AW VM RIT (13-2VM REPORT PENDING)	12/12/2012 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT	2/29/2012 12:38:53 PM
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (REAFFIRM)	3/2/2011 12:38:53 PM
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (SKETCH AND (b)(3):10 USC § 424	2/25/2009 12:38:53 PM
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (REAFFIRM-2006)	6/9/2006
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM (458TH CO--(b)(6)	5/20/2005
A--USA RESEARCH (JPAC W/IMAGERY)	2/27/2004
A--USA RESEARCH (DPMO - IMAGERY)	6/13/2003
A--JOINT SURVEY (W/HRDT) (XE 27873 15511)	1/24/2001
A--JOINT SURVEY (XE278155 & XE277173) (REAFFIRM)	3/1/2000
A--JOINT SURVEY (REAFFIRM)	8/6/1999
A--JOINT SURVEY CRAHSITE; RESCIND UW AND UA	3/12/1999
PP--JTF ASSESSMENT	12/17/1998
PP--PENDING REPORT ANALYSIS	4/17/1998
PP--50TH JFA	10/30/1997
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS; UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRM BOTH)	11/22/1996
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRMED (b)(6) ASSIST WHEN RECOVERED)	2/29/1996
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (OB LEADS)	4/27/1995
A--JOINT ARCHIVES, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES, WITNESSES, REMAINS; VNA PHOTO	

**Further Pursuit Information**

JOINT EXCAVATE VM: This case passed an Excavation Decision Board (EDB) on 3 September 2015. There are two isolated burial sites that will be excavated: Site 1 VM 03267, and Site 2 VM 03299 (48Q XE 27699 16434). Both sites will be excavated by the Vietnam Recovery Team (VRT). [17-4VM]

[October 2017 Note: Site VM-03299 was closed during 17-4VM with no material evidence discovered. Site VM-03267 was begun during the same JFA, and will likely require two additional JFAs to complete. It's status is Open-General. See reporting in Joint section for 17-4VM.]

AW VM RIT A: Interview (b)(6) located during Advance Work 15-3VM (119th JFA).

**Further Pursuit Deferred Information**

NA

**No Further Pursuit Information**

NA



# Maj Francisco, USAF

